

## REMARKS

In paragraph 1 on page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner has requested reference to use of resilient latches, a slidable retention sleeve, and a fluid filled hose with bellows type portions in the Abstract. In the foregoing amended Abstract, reference is made to a coupling member or slidable retention sleeve on one of the modules, as well as resilient latch formations for releasably securing the modules together in a mated position. A sentence has been added at the end of the Abstract to refer to the optional collapsible fluid-filled hose with bellows portions extending between connector modules. It is believed that the Abstract should now meet the Examiner's requirements.

On page 2, second paragraph of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected that claim 10, line 1, should read "member is". The wording of claim 10 is now incorporated in independent claims 11, 12 and 14, and this portion of the wording has been corrected in each of these claims to read "the coupling member being movable....." (see line 1 of seventh sub-paragraph). The Examiner also objected that "detent" should be --indent-- in claims 17 and 48, and this terminology has been used in amended claims 17 and 48. It is submitted that these corrections deal with the Examiner's objections in the second paragraph of page 2 of the Office Action.

The Examiner has rejected a number of the claims as anticipated or obvious. However, the Examiner indicates on page 4 that claims 11 to 15, 28, 41, 43 and 44 would be allowable if rewritten independently to include the subject matter of the base claim and any intervening claim. In the foregoing amendment, rejected claims 1, 2, 10, 25, 27, 29, and 37 to 40 have been canceled without prejudice. Applicant intends to file a continuation application directed to the canceled claims before prosecution of the current application is complete.

Allowable dependent claim 11 has been rewritten as an independent claim to include the subject matter of claims 1 and 10, from which it previously depended, and this claim should therefore be allowable. Additionally, dependent claims 3 to 9 and 16 to 24 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 11, and should also now be allowable.

Allowable claim 12 has also been rewritten as an independent claim in the foregoing amendment, and now includes the subject matter of claims 1 and 10. It is therefore submitted that claim 12 is now allowable, along with claim 13 which depends from claim 12. Allowable claim 14 has also been rewritten as an independent claim including the subject matter of claims 1 and 10, and should now be allowable, along with claim 15 which depends from claim 14.

Allowable claim 28 has also been rewritten as an independent claim including the subject matter of claims 25 and 27, from which it previously depended, and this claim is also now allowable. Claims 26 and 30 to 32 have been amended to depend from claim 28, and should also be allowable. Allowable claim 41 has also been rewritten as an independent claim including the subject matter of claims 38, 39 and 40, from which it previously depended. Claim 41 is therefore also now allowable, along with claims 42 to 46 which have been amended to depend from claim 41.

The Examiner has rejected claims 33 to 37 as anticipated or obvious based on O'Brien alone or combined with secondary references. Amended claim 33 should now be allowable since it includes the subject matter of claim 37, which has been canceled, as well as the subject matter of allowable claim 11. Claims 34 to 36 should also be allowable since they depend from amended claim 33 and also include subject matter not suggested by the references.

It is believed that all of the claims remaining in this application, specifically claims 3 to 9, 11 to 24, 26, 28, 30 to 36, and 41 to 51, should now be allowable, and that this application is now in condition in all respects for allowance. Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. If there are any outstanding objections which could be dealt with by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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